

Summary of Watershed-Based Mitigation Subcommittee Meeting

Sep. 21, 2004, 10:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Natural Resources Building Room 175, Olympia

Attendees:

Annie Szvetcz (Ecology); Peter Birch, Bob Zeigler, Tim Smith, and Margen Carlson (Fish and Wildlife); Jay Udelhoven (Natural Resources); Barb Aberle, Dick Gersib, and Tim Hilliard (Transportation); Phil Miller (Governor's Salmon Recovery Office); Rick Anderson (HDR/EES); Jackie White (Association of Washington Cities).

Updates:

Barb Aberle updated the group on issues related to TPEAC sun-setting and ongoing implementation. March 06 is the official TPEAC sunset date and funding will diminish after the end of the 2007 biennium. Barb is now planning for implementation. She noted that there was a legislative report in Dec. '03, and another due in December '04. She agreed to write a short white paper on sunset issues.

Dick mentioned that Sheila North, former active subcommittee member, was now working for the Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group (<http://www.lcfeg.org/>) as an Outreach Coordinator and would be a valuable contact. She will be presenting information on her group to TPEAC.

Policy and Pilot Projects SR 539 and US 12 – Rick Anderson

Rick noted that the SR 4 pilot is on hold due to a pending mitigation agreement that would make their work moot.

For SR 539 they are trying to work out the details – mitigation opportunities are needed quickly. There are a lot of complications.

For SR 12, the work is proceeding. They started on Aug. 23, on Sep 22 they are meeting with regional WSDOT staff and others to really get the ball rolling. They are looking at phases 4, and 5 of the highway project. The Sep. 22 meeting is a “pre-characterization analysis” meeting. Then they will have two months to try to replicate indicators per the WSDOT watershed characterization methodology (<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/environment/watershed/docs/methods.pdf>) by using locally available data, local products and EDT results, etc. A detailed handout of the Integrated Mitigation Guidance (IMG) workplan was discussed. A major issue is how to evaluate the Integrated Mitigation? Ideas included timing (did it speed up the process?), quality (did we end up with better information?), and communication (was the information well-communicated?). An evaluation methodology is included in the handouts.

DNR Wetland Bank Legislation – Jay Udelhoven

Jay handed out a detailed set of information about the newly reconstituted DNR Wetland Bank Legislation. This bill has a smaller scope than the bill that went to the legislature last year. It calls for one pilot project instead of a full-scale banking effort. It still establishes accounts to administer the banks. The pilot is expected to be between 200 and 1000 acres.

Governor's Watershed Mitigation effort – Phil Miller

Phil talked about the effort underway by the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office to coordinate mitigation funding and salmon recovery. Where is the state going in regards to watershed effort, local role in recovery, funding, mitigation, and implementation of watershed plans?

The idea of Watershed Action Councils has been raised.

We are moving towards overall watershed enhancement instead of single-species management.

What is the future of the GSRO? Recommendations will be finished by December and forwarded to the Governor and from him to the new Governor.

Mitigation Optimization Effort – Tim Smith

Tim introduced an effort looking at a broader application of some of the ideas coming out of TPEAC and other forums. They are looking at regulatory reform and opportunities to tie mitigation to watershed planning. How can we meet regulatory requirements and achieve better environmental benefits?

They would like to see a consistent watershed assessment methodology and other data collection statewide. One way to move in this direction is to develop and apply a restoration transition guideline.

There was an extensive discussion of this and how it relates to the efforts of this committee, Rick Anderson's work, and the work we heard about today that is being undertaken by the Governor's office.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 19, room TBD.

Potential subjects for that meeting are:

- IMG discussion (continued) with Rick Anderson

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned 3:00 PM